

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of operating an airfield lighting system of an airport, comprising
5 the steps of:
 - providing a processing system local to the airport in communication with the airfield lighting system for monitor and control thereof, said airfield lighting system producing airfield information for processing by said local processing system;
 - 10 connecting said local processing system to a global communication network; and
 - accessing said airfield information from a remote location disposed on said global communication network.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said airfield information is accessed by a
15 user at said remote location, in the step of accessing, via a central control center which is disposed on said global communication network.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein said central control center provides
access to said airfield information via a web site.
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4. The method of Claim 3, wherein said web site presents said airfield information to said user at said remote location in response to said user first providing a valid authorization code.
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5. The method of Claim 2, wherein said user is a sales/marketing person at said remote location, which said remote location is a sales/marketing node disposed on said global communication network.
6. The method of Claim 2, wherein said user is a customer at said remote location, which said remote location is a customer node disposed on said global communication network.
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7. The method of Claim 2, wherein said user is a maintenance repair person at said remote location, which said remote location is a contractor node which is disposed on said global communication network.

5 8. The method of Claim 1, wherein said airfield information is accessed, in the step of accessing, directly by a user at said remote location which is disposed on said global communication network.

10 9. The method of Claim 1, wherein said global communication network is the Internet.

15 10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of notifying a user with a notification message which is automatically transmitted in response to a fault detected in the airfield lighting system.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein said notification message is transmitted via electronic mail to said user.

20 12. The method of Claim 10, wherein said notification message is transmitted via cellular telephone to said user.

13. The method of Claim 10, wherein said notification message is transmitted via a wireless pager to said user.

25 14. The method of Claim 10, wherein said notification message is transmitted from a central control center disposed on said global communication network which uploads said airfield information from said local processing system via said global communication network on a periodic basis and processes said uploaded airfield information to determine if a fault condition has occurred in the airfield lighting system of the airport.

15. The method of Claim 1, wherein said communication in the step of providing is wireless.

16. The method of Claim 1, wherein said communication in the step of 5 providing is via wire.

17. The method of Claim 1, wherein said communication in the step of providing is via fiber optic.

10 18. The method of Claim 1, wherein said airfield information in the step of providing includes data which unrelated to airfield lighting.

19. A method of operating a plurality of general aviation airports each having an airfield system, comprising the steps of:

15 providing a local processing system at each airport, which said local processing system communicates with the corresponding airfield system for monitor and control thereof, and which the airfield system generates airfield information which is communicated to said local processing system for processing;

20 disposing a central control center on a global communication network such that said central control center communicates with one or more of said local processing systems via said global communication network; and

25 authorizing access, via said central control center, to said airfield information by one or more users from one or more remote locations disposed on said global communication network.

20. The method of Claim 19, wherein select ones of said one or more users are provided access to said airfield information of corresponding select ones of the plurality of airport airfield systems via said global communication network in accordance with a respective unique authorization code.

30 21. The method of Claim 19, wherein said global communication network is the Internet.

22. The method of Claim 19, wherein select ones of said one or more users are notified in response to a fault condition detected by said airfield system at a corresponding select one of said plurality of airports.

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23. The method of Claim 22, wherein a central processing system of said central control center automatically notifies select ones of said one or more users in response to a fault condition detected in one or more of the airfield systems.

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24. The method of Claim 23, wherein said automatic notification is provided to said one or more users via electronic mail over said global communication network.

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25. The method of Claim 19, wherein said central control center in the step of disposing comprises a data server which stores said airfield information from each of the plurality of airports.

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26. The method of Claim 25, wherein said data server stores maintenance information communicated thereto by a technician who made repairs in response to a fault condition detected at a select one of the plurality of airports, and which said maintenance information is accessible by said one or more users in the step of authorizing.

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27. The method of Claim 25, wherein said data server tracks inventory information of an inventory such that removal of a part from said inventory triggers a replacement process which replaces said part in said inventory.

28. A system of operating an airfield lighting system of an airport, comprising:

a processing system local to the airport and in communication with the airfield lighting system for monitor and control thereof, said airfield lighting system producing airfield information for processing by said local processing system;

5 wherein said local processing system connects to a global communication packet-switched network such that said airfield information is accessed from a remote location disposed on said global communication network.

10 29. The system of Claim 28, wherein said airfield information is accessed by a user at said remote location via a central control center which is disposed on said global communication network.

15 30. The system of Claim 29, wherein said central control center provides access to said airfield information via a web site.

31. The system of Claim 30, wherein said web site presents said airfield information to said user at said remote location in response to said user first providing a valid authorization code.

20 32. The system of Claim 29, wherein said user is a sales/marketing person at said remote location, which said remote location is a sales/marketing node disposed on said global communication network.

25 33. The system of Claim 29, wherein said user is a customer of said remote location, which said remote location is a customer node disposed on said global communication network.

34. The system of Claim 29, wherein said user is a maintenance repair person of said remote location, which said remote location is a contractor node disposed on said 30 global communication network.

35. The system of Claim 28, wherein said airfield information is accessed directly from a user at said remote location which is disposed on said global communication network.

5 36. The system of Claim 28, wherein said global communication packet-switched network is the Internet.

10 37. The system of Claim 28, wherein a user is notified with a notification message which is automatically transmitted in response to a fault condition detected in the airfield lighting system.

38. The system of Claim 37, wherein said notification message is transmitted via electronic mail to said user.

15 39. The system of Claim 37, wherein said notification message is transmitted via cellular telephone to said user.

20 40. The system of Claim 37, wherein said notification message is transmitted via a wireless pager to said user.

25 41. The system of Claim 37, wherein said notification message is transmitted from a central control center disposed on said global communication network which uploads said airfield information from said local processing system via said global communication network on a periodic basis and processes said uploaded airfield information to determine if a fault condition has occurred in the airfield lighting system of the airport.

42. The system of Claim 28, wherein said communication is wireless.

43. A system of operating a plurality of general aviation airports each having an airfield system, comprising:

5 a local processing system provided at each airport, which said local processing system communicates with the corresponding airfield system for monitor and control thereof, and which said local processing system generates airfield information in response to communicating with said airfield system; and

10 a central control center disposed on a global communication network such that said central control center communicates with one or more of said local processing systems via said global communication network;

15 wherein access to said airfield information by one or more users is authorized via said central control center from a remote location disposed on said global communication network.

44. The system of Claim 43, wherein select ones of said one or more users are provided access to said airfield information of corresponding select ones of the plurality of airport airfield systems via said global communication network in accordance with a unique authorization code.

45. The system of Claim 43, wherein said global communication network is 20 the Internet.

46. The system of Claim 43, wherein select ones of said one or more users are notified in response to a fault condition detected at a corresponding select one of said plurality of airports.

25 47. The system of Claim 46, wherein a processing system of said central control center automatically notifies select ones of said one or more users in response to a fault condition detected in one or more of the airfield systems.

30 48. The system of Claim 47, wherein said automatic notification is provided to said one or more users via electronic mail over said global communication network.

49. The method of Claim 43, wherein said central control center in the step of disposing comprises a data server which stores said airfield information from each of the plurality of airports.

50. The method of Claim 49, wherein said data server stores maintenance information communicated thereto by a technician who made repairs in response to a fault condition detected at a select one of the plurality of airports, and which said maintenance information is accessible by said one or more users in the step of authorizing.

51. The method of Claim 49, wherein said data server tracks inventory information of an inventory such that removal of a part from said inventory triggers a replacement process which replaces said part in said inventory.